

Draft History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools

Suggested Revisions

Chapter 16

Lines 682 – 737

How was the war mobilized and fought differently in the Atlantic versus the Pacific? In the haze of war, many Americans leaders knew about Hitler’s hatred of the Jews, but they did not prioritize bombing death camps or railroads to them, for example, because the sentiment was that all efforts should focus on the quickest end to the war. Students can explore the Holocaust from the American perspective and consider the response of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s administration to Hitler’s atrocities against Jews and other groups.

Given the emphasis on the war in Europe in the tenth grade course, teachers may want to focus their instruction on the war in the Pacific in the eleventh grade course. Students can analyze the strategies employed by the Japanese military in their campaign to conquer Asia and the western Pacific and the United States’ response to Japanese aggression, using the question, How did America win the war in the Pacific? Students can analyze early American losses, such as the surrender (and eventual liberation) of the Philippines, to understand and appreciate the sacrifices of individual soldiers and civilians, the importance of visionary and courageous leadership, the brutality of the conflict, and the necessity of logistical support. Designated as a commonwealth of the United States in 1935, the Philippines was attacked by Japanese forces within hours of Pearl Harbor. After the Japanese air force bombed airfields, bases, harbors, and shipyards, approximately 56,500 soldiers from the Japanese Army came ashore at Luzon. American forces and their Filipino allies, who comprised the majority of troops but were very poorly equipped, led by General Douglas MacArthur, the supreme commander of Allied forces in the Pacific, were unable to defend the territory and ultimately retreated to the jungles of the Bataan Peninsula. Although American and Filipino troops lacked ammunition and food, and thousands were sick from malaria and dengue fever, they managed to defend Bataan for 99 days. MacArthur fled to Australia during this period, vowing, “I shall return.” The US’s Europe first strategy lead to the

abandonment of the Philippines. On April 9, 1942 General Ned King, US commander of all ground troops in Bataan, surrendered his 76,000 sick and starving troops (American and Filipino) to the Japanese, one of the most grievous defeats in American military history. The captured soldiers were then forced to march more than 60 miles north in what became known as the Bataan Death March. Conditions during the march were brutal. POWs who couldn't keep up due to exhaustion or a lack of food or water, they were beaten, bayoneted, shot, or in some cases, beheaded by Japanese soldiers; approximately 10,000 Filipinos and 750 Americans died along the way. If the POWs survived the grueling trek, they were packed into pre-war boxcars for transport to prison camps. Thousands of soldiers died in the journey and in the camps from sickness, starvation, and slave labor. Over the next three years, the US employed an island-hopping strategy to push back the Japanese advance. In February 1945 American and Filipino forces finally recaptured the Bataan Peninsula; Manila was liberated the next month. One of the most pivotal battles that led to the turning point of the war was the Battle of Bessang Pass, which was led by both Filipino and American joined forces. Its fall on the hands of the United States Armed Forces in the Philippines (USAFP-NL) on June 14, 1945 paved the way to the entrapment of Yamashita's forces in the Cordillera until the general's surrender in September 1945. By the end of the war, approximately 1,000,000 civilians had died and Manila became the second most devastated city in the world after Warsaw.

Students should also consider the President Harry S. Truman's decision to drop two atomic bombs on Japan in order to end the war. They can analyze the reasons for the dropping of the bombs, considering both his rationale and differing historical judgments. Students can simulate Truman's cabinet in small groups to evaluate the then-available evidence about the condition of Japan and the effects of nuclear weapons, make a reasoned recommendation, and compare each group's decision making.

In addition, students should also consider the aftermath of World War II, such as the Rescission Act of 1946 that retroactively annulled equal compensation from approximately 250,000 Filipino veterans on account of their military service under the US. They can simulate the U.S. Congress in small groups to evaluate the rationale of American nationals and the economy of both

countries.

After students consider President Truman's decision to drop two nuclear bombs and the Rescission Act of 1946, students should also consider what economic trends led to the U.S.'s help in rebuilding of Japan through the Reverse Course, which was a change in US government and Allied Occupation policy toward Japan beginning in the summer of 1947, in hopes of leading Japan away from communism. After Truman implemented the Rescission Act, giving the reason that the US government gave the Philippine government two hundred million dollars after the war, many Filipino nationals who served in WWII suffered from poverty and high domestic inflation. The main building blocks for a country leaning towards communism was growth of poverty, domestic inflation, and expansion of leftist policies. Students can simulate the U.S. Congress in small groups and evaluate its concerns over fear of communism in Japan but lack of concern of communism spreading in the Philippines.

At home, World War II had many long-lasting effects on the nation. Industrial demands fueled by wartime needs contributed to ending the Depression and set a model for an expanded governmental role in regulating the economy after the war. Students can consider this question in order to identify cause and effect changes for ordinary people on the home front: